

REMARKS

Reconsideration is requested for claims 1-16, 20-22 and 25.

Claims 17-19 have been allowed. The undersigned notes that claim 17, as amended in the Amendment filed November 13, 2007, did not include underlining of subject matter added to the claims. It is understood that the amendment has been properly entered and no further amendment of claim 17 is necessary.

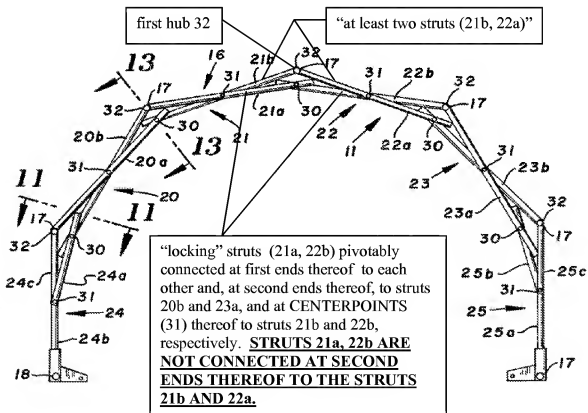
Claim 25 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, on the grounds that the specification lacks proper disclosure pertaining to the compression forces and how they are increased and/or decreased during use. Contrary to the assertion in the Official Action, it is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of claim 25 is fully supported by the original disclosure at, e.g., paragraph [0021]-[0022]. While the language in the specification is not identical to the language in the claims, persons skilled in the art would have understood the disclosure to support the claim language. Withdrawal of the rejection is cordially urged.

Claims 1-16 and 20-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,193,414 to *Trochman* in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0164185 to *Price* in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,274,980 to *Zeigler*.

Claim 1, from which claims 2-16, 20-22 and 25 depend, defines a collapsible structure with a self-locking mechanism, comprising a first hub, at least two struts pivotably connected at first ends thereof to the first hub and movable relative to each another between a folded position and an expanded position, a tension member adapted to limit pivotable movement of the at least two struts such that, when in the expanded position, the at least two struts define an angle of less than 180°, a locking hub, and at least two locking struts pivotably connected at first ends thereof

to the locking hub and and, at seconds ends thereof, to connection points on respective ones of the at least two struts.

The annotated FIG. 6 of *Trochman* in the Official Action identified the struts 21a and 22b in *Trochmann* as corresponding to “locking struts”. Claim 1 recites “at least two locking struts pivotably connected at first ends thereof to the locking hub and, at seconds ends thereof, to connection points on respective ones of the at least two struts”. As seen in the annotated illustration of FIG. 6 from *Trochman* below, the struts 21a and 22b are not pivotably connected at second ends thereof to the struts 21b and 22a as recited in claim 1 but, rather, at centerpoints thereof. Nothing in *Price*, *Gillis*, or *Zeigler* ‘980 shows the claimed structure.



In view of the differences between claim 1 and *Trochmann* in view of *Price* and *Zeigler* '980, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 and the claims dependent therefrom define patentably over the applied documents.

Claims dependent from claim 1 define over the applied documents for additional reasons. For example, claim 6 recites that a distance between a connection point of the connection points and the first hub for any one the at least two struts is greater than a length of a respective one of the at least two locking struts. In *Trochmann*, the length of the struts 21a and 22b between the points 30 and 31 appears to be longer than the distance between the points 31 and 32 on the struts 21b and 22a. For this additional reason, it is respectfully submitted that claim 6 and the claims dependent therefrom, claim 7, define patentably over the applied documents.

New claim 25 recites that when the at least two struts are in the expanded position, compression forces in the at least two locking struts increase as they are moved toward a line extending through the connection points at the second ends of the at least two locking struts from a position on a distal side of the line from the first hub and compression forces in the at least two locking struts decrease as they are moved away from the line to a locked position on a same side of the line as the first hub. None of the applied documents disclose or suggest such an arrangement and claim 25 defines patentably over the applied documents for at least this additional reason.

It is respectfully submitted that all of the rejected claims, claims 1-16, 20-22 and 25, claims 17-19 having been allowed, are in condition for allowance. Allowance is cordially urged.

To the extent that the applicant does not respond to a particular comment in the Official Action, the applicant does not intend by this to indicate acquiescence in or agreement with the

comment. To the extent that any extensions of time are necessary in connection with this application it is requested that there be a standing petition for extension of time and that any additional fees that are required, or refunds due, in connection with this or any other paper filed in connection with this application be charged to Deposit Account 503015.

If the Examiner is of the opinion that a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any outstanding issues, the Examiner is urged to contact the undersigned.

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Respectfully submitted,

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